

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Klarides Hails Unanimous Senate Passage of Underage Drinking Bill



HARTFORD – The state Senate today unanimously passed legislation that prohibits individuals from allowing minors to possess alcohol on private property and prohibits minors from possessing alcohol on private property. The measure passed the state House of Representatives last week. State Representative Themis Klarides (R-114) hailed the passage today the landmark

legislation that she has worked on for a number of years, and helped shepherd out of the Judiciary Committee earlier last month.

“This bill holds adults responsible for what they allow to take place on their property,” said Klarides. “That old double standard that has existed where the law looked the other way when underage drinking took place on private property or in the home will be erased when this bill is signed into law.”

Representative Klarides has spent a number of years combating underage drinking, helping many Connecticut communities such as Woodbridge, Seymour, Cheshire, Orange, Glastonbury, Ellington and Newington outlaw social hosting by local ordinance. She serves on the Executive Board of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and received their GLADD Award (Government Leaders Against Drunk Driving) several years running for her efforts in passing legislation aimed at tightening restrictions against drunk driving offenders. She was also honored by the CT Coalition to Stop Underage Drinking for her efforts to fight social hosting.

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), children who begin drinking alcohol before age 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol problems as adults than those who start after age 21. National research also shows that a higher percentage of youth aged 12-to-20 use alcohol than tobacco or illicit drugs, making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States. In response, the U.S. Surgeon General has declared a first-ever “Call to Action” on this issue.

The bill, *HB 5211, An Act Concerning Underage Drinking* will now head to Governor M. Jodi Rell for her signature. The 2006 session of the Connecticut General Assembly adjourns on May 3rd.